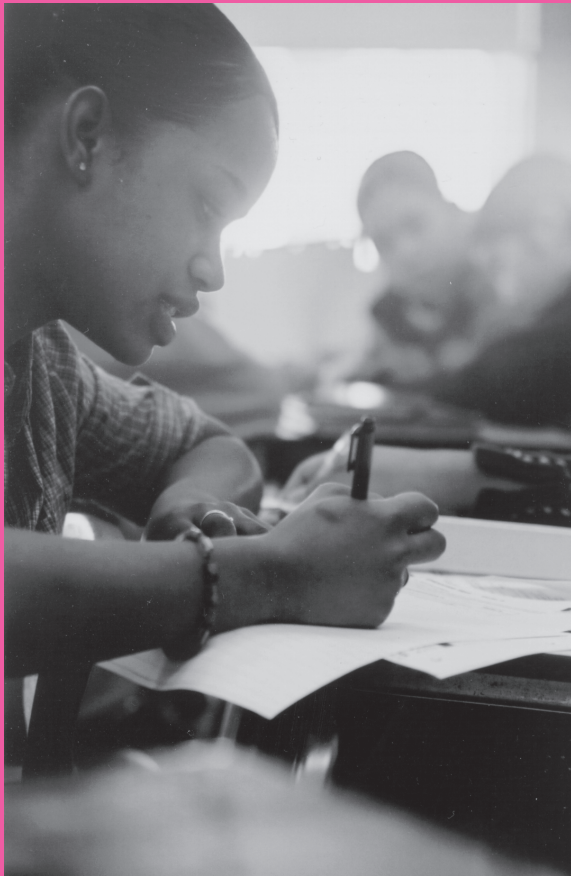


RHODE ISLAND

STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

2001



Writing
Assessment

Guide to Interpretation

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

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BACKGROUND

In 1986 and 1987, the Rhode Island Department of Education expanded its assessment of language skills to include examining students' ability to write at grade three. In 1989, the Department expanded the writing assessment to include the writing of sixth-grade students. Since that time, the assessment has evolved into testing at grades three, seven, and eleven in three different genres. The assessment is aimed at measuring a student's ability to communicate effectively through writing in a way that models a process approach to writing. Research on the acquisition of writing indicates that the most effective classroom experiences are those that encourage and promote writing as a dynamic series of actions on the part of the writer.

The 2000–2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment was a collaborative effort of the Rhode Island Department of Education, Measured Progress, and the Rhode Island Writing Project. Moreover, teachers and school administrators from nearly every district in the state participated in the scoring process at grades three, seven, and eleven. Through this collaborative effort, the Department of Education hopes that the writing assessment will continue to be a catalyst to developing writing curricula in the schools.

PURPOSE

With increased attention on writing, educators have focused on the nature of writing processes and, in particular, on the wide variety of higher-order skills from which writers draw in any act of writing. These higher-order skills include planning, thinking, categorizing, choosing, organizing, and using language to deliver an intended message.

The program in Rhode Island has its roots in performance-based assessment that attempts to match teaching and testing practices as closely as possible. Performance-based assessment measures student progress using criteria based upon classroom practices. These writing assessments usually involve the collection of writing completed under controlled circumstances. Although a single writing sample can only approximate what happens in reality, the evaluation of that sample can provide an indication of the fluency of a student's writing. Moreover, a large-scale writing assessment can help evaluate curriculum and promote effective writing instruction at the classroom level.

Building on these assumptions, the Rhode Island Department of Education has chosen a "process

model" for its writing assessment. This interpretation guide is intended to help teachers and students understand the assessment results by presenting annotated samples of student writing. (Grades three and seven were field-tested in 1998. Grade eleven was field-tested in 2000.)

This booklet provides an overview of the test and an explanation of the holistic scoring process that was used to assess the third-, seventh-, and eleventh-grade writing samples. It provides a practical basis for interpreting Rhode Island students' writing scores. Besides providing teachers and administrators with descriptions of the assessment process, this book seeks to introduce some instructional aids, such as a diagram of writing as a process (Appendix C), and a review of teaching resources (Appendix E).

THE WRITING TESTS

OVERVIEW

The evaluation plan used for the Rhode Island third-, seventh-, and eleventh-grade Writing Assessments was based on research in the teaching of writing, a strong belief in teacher involvement, and a commitment to a direct link between assessment and instruction. Specific factors that guided the development of the assessment include

- the selection of an evaluation model that reflects a process approach to writing;
- the development of the writing exercise with the advice of knowledgeable teachers and test developers;
- the establishment of a cadre of trained educators skilled in scoring essays—who can serve as resource persons in each district to strengthen the use and understanding of the writing assessment; and
- the establishment of valid scoring procedures that address the integration of many skills that the writer may use to respond to a particular topic or situation—including such elements as ideas, organization, tone, audience awareness, transitions, grammar, and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).

TEST DEVELOPMENT

Since 1987, Rhode Island writing committees have met regularly with assessment consultants to plan and design writing prompts. Field testing and subsequent evaluation of the results enable the writing committees to select prompts that require comparable levels of writing skills and to which all students have access. Prompts are selected with the following questions in mind:

- Is the prompt comparable to others that were field tested?
 - Is the assigned task clearly explained?
 - How appropriate is it to the students' grade level?
 - Does the prompt ask for skills specific to a particular genre of writing, such as narrative, informative/expository, or persuasive?
 - Can the responses be scored easily with the scoring criteria?
 - Does the topic allow for students to perform as positively as possible?
- The following 2001 prompts were selected after having been field-tested and validated in a number of schools:
- **Grade Three Writing Prompt:** If one of your toys were to come to life, which one would it be? Describe the toy and write an adventure that you had with the toy.
 - **Grade Seven Writing Prompt:** Think about your favorite time of year. Describe how it is different from the rest of the year, and explain to the reader what makes it special to you.
 - **Grade Eleven Writing Prompt:** School administrators plan to eliminate one program to save money. They will drop all sports, or computer labs, or the arts. Choose one of these programs and write an essay arguing why it should be saved.

TEST DEVELOPMENT (Continued)

The prompt chosen for grade three asked students to respond in a narrative mode of writing. At grade seven, students were asked to respond in an informative/expository style, and at grade eleven in a persuasive mode. The decision to

require students to respond in three different genres of writing at the three different grade levels was made to align the assessment with the standards in the English language arts framework.

TEST ADMINISTRATION

At grades three and seven, the writing assessment involves a writing assignment administered over two consecutive days. The writing assignment gives students time for prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing to model a process approach to writing. On the first day of the testing, the students receive a writing prompt; the teacher reads directions aloud while the students follow along. Students write first drafts on standard school paper with a total of 50 minutes allocated for distributing materials, directions, prewriting and generating a first draft. Forty minutes of this time is for actual writing.

On the second day, the students answer a series of revision questions designed to help them reread and revise their first drafts. A total of 50 minutes is allocated for the second day, just as for the first day. The teachers read revision directions

and ask students to consider several questions about their writing, such as:

1. Did you give a good description of ...? (specific to prompt)
2. Did you explain clearly ...? (specific to prompt)
3. How can you make the writing more interesting?
4. What changes do you think will improve your original draft?

Finally, the students use a short checklist of editing questions about punctuation, spelling, and mechanics to make final corrections. Their final compositions, not the drafts or the composing process, are scored.

At grade eleven, students are instructed to follow a similar procedure, except that students are allocated one 85-minute period for all activities, including directions. (At all grades, there is an additional ten minutes of flexible time, if needed, at the conclusion of testing.)

SCORING PROCESS

OVERVIEW

One of the most productive and valid means of assessing writing as written communication is holistic scoring. Holistic scoring assumes that writing should be measured as a whole piece and that error counts do not accurately reflect competency levels.

Between June 26 and July 18, 2001, teams of scorers (see Appendix B), many selected from recommendations made by Rhode Island public school superintendents, met to score the third-, seventh-, and eleventh-grade writing samples. The chief readers were responsible for training scorers in holistic scoring methods, monitoring discussions, and answering questions, while consultants from Measured Progress provided technical and logistical support. Teachers and administrators who had served on the writing committee acted as table leaders and were assigned a group of readers. The table leaders facilitated the training in holistic scoring by leading discussions of the criteria and the sample papers at their tables, and by monitoring the scoring. Essays were given two readings and, on each reading, scored on a scale of 1 to 6. Scores and a reader identification number were recorded on a score sheet designed by Measured Progress. If a reader was found to have a large number of essays at variance with a second reader, she or he could be easily identified and further trained.

For score reliability, “discrepant” scores were read a third time. Discrepant scores are those having a difference of more than 1. For example, one reader may score an essay at a 5 while the second reader may score the same essay at a 3. Such scores were resolved by the chief readers who read the essay for a third time.

The writing prompts permitted a broad range of responses and approaches to the question from the students. There was a score of NR (no response) for test booklets that were blank or contained just one or two words. Another score, OT, indicated papers that were completely off topic or were not written in English.

Crisis responses are those written by students that require further attention at the school district level. Such responses usually focus on a personal problem the student may be facing. Copies of crisis papers were sent to school principals with a letter recommending that action be taken.

Scores reported to districts, teachers, and students reflect the fact that two readers scored each essay. The scores were combined so that a paper that received two scores of 4 would be given a final score of 8; a paper that received a 5 and a 6 would receive a final score of 11; and so on. Thus the scores reported appear to be scored on a scale of 2 to 12.

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SCORING CRITERIA

The criteria selected for use in the scoring of the Rhode Island Writing Assessment were originally developed by the writing committees in consultation with Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the Rhode Island Writing Project. Initially, the committees were unsure how complex the writing would be and felt a 4-point scale would be appropriate. However, it became clear that student writing was becoming increasingly complex. Additionally, standards in writing were set at higher levels. The 4-point scale was not able to identify outstanding writing adequately, nor did it provide enough categories to clearly distinguish between those students whose writing was in the middle range.

As a consequence, the writing committees developed a 6-point scale, which was used for the first time in 1991. Criteria were not grade-specific; the qualities described represented the qualities of good writing at any level. That rubric continues to be used at grades three and seven.

Last year, for the first time, a persuasive rubric was developed for use at grade eleven. It is based on the New Standard's rubric for persuasive writing and Rhode Island's existing rubric. Rhode Island educators were involved in its development.

When a piece of writing is read by a scorer, that scorer does not evaluate discrete or separate elements. In a few moments, the reader responds to what the whole piece communicates. If the whole is unintelligible or barely readable, the reader does not receive the full message in the most effective way. On the other hand, a piece with some surface grammatical errors can communicate so effectively through ideas, descriptive language, and originality that the reader barely notices the errors. In holistic scoring, the scorers do not necessarily penalize students for grammatical errors, but rather for weaknesses that obscure the meaning and general impressions of the essay. It should be remembered that the reported scores in the writing assessment reflect a performance level described by the criteria.

SCORING PROCESS

SCORING CRITERIA: RHODE ISLAND WRITING ASSESSMENT (GRADES THREE AND SEVEN)

SCORE	CRITERIA
6	Presents thoughtful ideas and develops them logically, fully, and clearly; is very well organized from beginning to end; has a strong command of sentence structure; uses language effectively; has few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). A "6" essay may be distinguished by features such as making insightful observations, using rich details, or creating an effective scene or mood.
5	Presents good ideas and develops them logically, fully, and clearly; is very well organized throughout; has a generally strong command of sentence structure; uses language well; has relatively few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.
4	Presents relevant ideas and develops them clearly and fairly well; is generally well organized throughout; has generally well-formed sentences; uses language fairly well; has relatively few serious, intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.
3	Presents some relevant ideas fairly clearly and gives some support; shows some sense of organization; has generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately; may contain some serious errors in grammar and conventions.
2	Gives some relevant ideas, but they are unclear or barely developed; shows little sense of organization; lacks sentence control; uses language poorly; probably contains serious errors in grammar and conventions.
1	Probably contains serious and persistent errors; is incoherent or underdeveloped.

SCORING PROCESS

SCORING CRITERIA: RHODE ISLAND WRITING ASSESSMENT RHODE ISLAND WRITING SCORING CRITERIA FOR GRADE 11 PERSUASIVE WRITING

SCORE	CRITERIA
6	Writing at this level establishes a clear stance or position and develops it fully and effectively; includes perceptive details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support; is very well-organized and provides appropriate closure; shows an awareness of audience by anticipating concerns; uses language effectively; has few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). A “6” essay may be distinguished by features such as using a range of strategies or engaging the reader by creating a context or persona.
5	Writing at this level establishes a clear stance or position and develops it fully; includes strong, relevant details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support; is well-organized and provides closure; shows an awareness of audience by anticipating concerns; uses language very well; has relatively few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.
4	Writing at this level establishes a clear stance or position and develops it well; includes relevant details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support; is generally well-organized and may provide closure; may show an awareness of audience; has generally well-formed sentences; uses language well; has relatively few serious, intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.
3	Writing at this level establishes a stance or position and provides some development; includes some details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support (may include irrelevant or contradictory information); shows some sense of organization that may provide closure; shows little awareness of audience; has generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately; may contain some serious errors in grammar and conventions.
2	Writing at this level may present an unclear or changing stance or position; selects some appropriate information, but it is barely developed or contradictory; shows little sense of organization; shows little or no awareness of audience; has inconsistent sentence control; uses language poorly; probably contains serious errors in grammar and conventions.
1	Writing at this level presents a stance or position that is underdeveloped, unfocused, or incoherent; may show minimal organization or sentence control; probably contains serious and persistent errors in language, grammar, and conventions.

SCORING PROCESS

REPORTING OF SCORES

Writing assessment results are provided in the following formats:

- Individual Student Performance Report
- Class Roster
- School Roster
- Summary Reports (by class, school, and district)

Students receive a single writing score, ranging from 2 to 12, that represents the combined scores of two readers. Parents are informed of this in a brochure that accompanies the student's performance report. The brochure also provides details of the assessment, the scoring criteria, and a sample student response that meets the standard. Teachers receive individual student scores on the Class Roster and also on the School Roster.

Students are classified in one of five performance categories: "Achieved the Standard with Honors" (score of 11–12, the sum of the scores from the two readers); "Achieved the Standard" (score of 8, 9, or 10); "Nearly Achieved the Standard" (score of 6 or 7); "Below the Standard" (score of 4 or 5); and "Little Evidence of Achievement" (score of 2, 3, or OT). In addition, a "No Score" category has been added this year. It applies to those students who were not tested and were not coded as exempted. Exempted students either

- 1) took the Alternate Assessment
- or
- 2) were functioning at a beginning level of English proficiency AND have been in the district for less than one academic year. (For more information, see *Rhode Island State Assessment Program 2001–Requirements for Student Participation and Assessment Accommodations*.)

Setting the standard that is expected for **all** students at a score point of 8 presents an ambitious and challenging target that is central to the core of the Rhode Island Comprehensive Education Strategy and Article 31.

When individual scores are interpreted, both the teacher and parent should be aware that this score is a single indicator of a student's writing ability and should be used in combination with other information about a student's writing achievement. It should also be noted that a different mode (or style) of writing was tested at each grade level; at grade 3, narrative; at grade 7, informative/expository; and at grade 11, persuasive. Since the writing assessment is subject to limitations, it may be best viewed as a good, objective starting point in identifying a student's writing ability.

The Summary Reports, by class, school, and district, present the percentage of all students (excluding exempted students) in the class, school, and district who achieved each of the five performance levels and those who received no score. In other words, the percentage of students achieving each of the five performance levels and receiving "No Score" is calculated over the denominator of all enrolled students minus those taking the Alternate Assessment and those who met the language exemption requirements.

OVERVIEW

The writing assessment is one of many steps in a comprehensive writing program. As one such step, the assessment's resulting scores can be used to strengthen and inform a writing program. The Rhode Island Writing Assessment reflects a model of writing as a process of interrelated and recursive mental action (see diagram, Appendix C). Like thinking, writing happens quickly, on several different planes, with additions, changes, and revisions. When asked, "What is difficult about writing?," many adult and student writers point out that their minds usually move more quickly than their hands can type or write, and that a wide gap exists between thought and concrete expression on paper. Hence, most writers learn by trial and error that writing is best done in a series of interrelated stages of listing, planning, note taking or sketching, and talking—all activities that writing researchers refer to using the broad term **rehearsing**.

Prewriting is another term writing researchers use, but such a term may be misleading since it implies activities that occur prior to the act of writing. In fact, we know that many experienced writers write before and during the rehearsal stage.

It is difficult to define **writing process** because the term describes processes of thought and communication that, like human beings, come in many varieties. The writing process includes a wide variety of intellectual activities such as planning, drafting, rereading, rewriting, and editing. Selected resources on the writing process and its use in classroom instruction are provided in Appendix E.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A WRITING PROGRAM

The importance of written communication is reflected in the continuous emphasis that writing has received for many years. Most recently, the content standards contained in the English language arts framework specifically address the writing process. "All students will compose clear text in a variety of forms for many purposes." (ELA Standard 3: Creation and Presentation of Text, *The Rhode Island English Language Arts Framework*) Research into the methods and strategies of effective, experienced writers has demonstrated that effective writers learn, usually by a trial-and-error approach, that writing is a process of recursive activities involving reading, rereading, writing, and rewriting. Recursive simply means turning back on itself. This is precisely what an effective writer's process does, in that the writer

moves back and forth between sentences and paragraphs, and between the meaning of ideas and the expressions of those ideas.

As a result of continued research in classrooms and schools in Great Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, researchers have suggested the elements of an effective writing classroom.

The following considerations are presented for your continued reflection on how best to support and encourage students' writing processes.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE WRITING CLASSROOM

1. In establishing goals for writing curricula, teachers must consider an environment that supports and encourages writing. Donald Graves, a nationally recognized writing expert, suggests that students need to write regularly—at least three hours a week. The classroom environment should include a predictable writing schedule so that students can expect to write.
2. In effective writing programs, teachers make clear to their students what is expected of them. Students are carefully taught to take responsibility for writing folders, editing checklists, and other responsibilities of the writer. Teachers encourage students to choose their own topics for writing. As Donald Graves suggests, effective writing teachers know that the students own their writing. In such a classroom, the teacher becomes a facilitator for the students' learning.
3. Writing teachers should consistently write and share their writing and revision processes with their students. Teachers, in this way, model writing behaviors. Effective teachers from kindergarten through college personally experience what they are asking of their students.
4. Teachers should confer and talk with their students about their writing in a way that models the behavior and questions they hope will occur when students talk with each other about their writing. They should also listen to their students discuss their writing since much can be learned about a writer that way. Teachers' conference questions should be open ended; Mary Ellen Giacobbe starts off conferences with first graders by saying "Tell me about your writing (or drawing)." (Giacobbe, 1988).
5. Effective writing teachers evaluate growth over time, basing their judgments on the work accumulating in the student's writing folder. These teachers establish clear criteria for evaluation (for writing in general and for individual assignments). They also explore and explain areas of success, progress, and concern in conference with each writer.
6. Effective teachers document their students' progress, not with a single number or letter, but by keeping track of what happens in conference: what revisions are made, what skills are used correctly, what skills students need to emphasize. Such teachers maintain permanent folders of their students' writing, having students date, collect, and file all their drafts.
7. Effective writing teachers provide opportunities for students to share their writing with a real "audience" and, when possible, have that audience respond to a finished piece of writing. Such teachers provide student writers with options for sharing their writing in such places as "published" books or classroom or school magazines, with classmates during sharing times, or in school newspapers or on bulletin boards.
8. Effective writing teachers provide a variety of writing materials, sizes and kinds of paper (lined and unlined), staplers, pencils, erasers, and rubber stamps that say "DRAFT" or "WORK IN PROGRESS." They have bulletin boards with student writing next to rubrics and standards for writing.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE WRITING CLASSROOM

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE WRITING CLASSROOM (Continued)

9. Effective teachers integrate writing into all content areas to support learning and thinking.
10. Effective writing teachers see each student and each classroom writing community as individual and dynamic. They integrate technology, as appropriate, to support writing and publishing activities. They encourage celebrations of writing through classroom, schoolwide, and community projects.

SUMMARY

The Rhode Island Writing Assessment has for its goal the increased and improved instruction of writing in Rhode Island schools. This writing test attempts to support a holistic approach to writing as process. It also attempts to teach writing as a process of generating ideas, organizing those ideas, rereading, rearranging, and rewriting, and finally editing and polishing.

One of the most productive elements of the writing assessment has been the inclusion of classroom teachers in planning, development, and scoring

of the test. Thus, the test has three interconnected goals: 1) to assess the actual writing of students in Rhode Island by evaluating samples holistically; 2) to encourage and support the development of curricula based upon the state framework, which reflects a process approach to writing; and 3) to provide teachers with a most valuable form of in-service training, that of examining and discussing the criteria for effective writing and scoring large numbers of actual student essays according to those criteria.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A: GRADES THREE, SEVEN, AND ELEVEN WRITING SAMPLES FROM FIELD-TESTING

The following writing samples were collected during the field-testing of the Rhode Island Writing Assessment and selected as anchor papers. Anchor papers help to define the criteria. Although the sample papers are typical examples of the scores they represent, the samples in each scoring category for each grade level of 3, 7, and 11 are not always of identical quality. In other words, each category of the 6-point scale will display a range of ability across that particular score. Therefore, a paper can be described as a “high 6” or a “low 6,” yet both scores indicate an essay clearly superior in comparison to the total test population. This concept is true across all scoring levels.

The writing samples that follow appear exactly as the students wrote them—no corrections have been made. Anonymity has been preserved for the writer, school, and district. Each essay is preceded by a typed version for easier reading, and underneath the typed transcription is a brief analysis that explains how the criteria apply to the score.

The writing samples on the following pages are student responses to the writing prompts listed below.

- Grade 3: If one of your toys were to come to life, which one would it be? Describe the toy and write an adventure that you had with the toy.
- Grade 7: Think about your favorite time of year. Describe how it is different from the rest of the year and explain to the reader what makes it special to you.
- Grade 11: School administrators plan to eliminate one program to save money. They will drop all sports, or computer labs, or the arts. Choose one of these programs and write an essay arguing why it should be saved.

GRADE THREE SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 6

CRITERIA:

Presents thoughtful ideas and develops them logically, fully, and clearly; is very well organized from beginning to end; has a strong command of sentence structure; uses language effectively; has few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). A “6” essay may be distinguished by features such as making insightful observations, using rich details, or creating an effective scene or mood.

ESSAY:

Smoochy Comes To Live

One morning I heard “Sam wake up, wakeup Sam, er we’ll be late!” I woke up, there was Smoochy (my beanie frog) lying on me! He said, “Get dressed or we’ll be late!” “Late for what?” I yawned. “Oh, I forgot to tell you, were going to frog land,” he said quietly.

After I ate breakfast, Smoochy snapped his fingers and the next I knew I was in a carnival with frogs! There were lots of rides, a ferris wheel, the fortune teller booth and millions of other rides! Smoochy asked, “What do you want to do first?” “Um, how about the chamber of devils.” “O.K.,” Smoochy replied.

After we did almost every ride we bought cotton candy we practically bought the whole booth. Then we bought lunch. “This is the best,” I said, “When do we have to leave?” “When the bell rings twice,” he replied, “But there’s one more ride, the tower of death.” “Let’s go,” I screamed. “O.K.,” Smoochy said.

In the tower of death there were knives trying to hit us and trap doors, but we made it! On the way out we got a prize we were the first people to make it through the tower of death alive!

When we got home Smoochy had turned into just a lifeless beanie frog again, but I still loved him!

THE END!

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the “6” level. The writer develops a number of thoughtful ideas to form an entertaining account of an adventure with “beanie frog.” A strong narrative is built through careful development of details. The conversations with “Smoochy” are amusing and engaging and demonstrate that the writer is well aware of the presence of an audience. Use of language is adequate to sustain all the qualities of the essay—in this sense language is used effectively.

APPENDIX A

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ESSAY CONTINUED:

want to do first?" "Um, how about the chamber of devils." "Oke," Smoochy replied.

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In the tower of death there were knives trying to hit us and trap doors, but we made it! On the way out we got a prize... we were the

APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

first people to make it through the
tower of death alive!

When we got home Smoochy
had turned into just a liveless beanie
frog again, but I still loved him!

THE END □
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GRADE THREE SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 5

CRITERIA:

Presents good ideas and develops them logically, fully, and clearly; is very well organized throughout; has a generally strong command of sentence structure; uses language well; has relatively few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

Hi, I'm Nick. A couple of weeks ago, my toy came to life. It was my catchers mitt. My catchers mitt has black leather and is 100% neylon stiched. I got that mitt for Christmas last year. This is my story.

Three weeks ago I was board in my house. It was raining. I was throwing a baseball into my catchers mitt. Sudenly, my catchers mitt was alive! I said "wow"! My catchers mitt was starting to talk. It said "hi Nick" I said "are you real"? It said "of course". After a wile I realized why it came to life.

The next day I had a baseball game. I was starting catcher. I didn't want to catch with an alive catchers mitt, but I had to catch. In warm ups my mitt said "ow" alot. I said that I was sorry I had to play catcher. It got used to it. It was the bottom of the ninth ining, there was two outs and the bases were loaded. I was still playing catcher. There was a full count and the score was 4-3 us. Sudenly, the man on third base started to steel home! I had the ball in my mitt. The guy slid right into my mitt and he was out! We won! My catchers mitt got hurt and it died. Now I could only play catch and play in a game with the mitt. I'll never forget those two days.

The End

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "5" level. The quality of the writing is sustained by ideas that are interesting and fully developed. As in many examples of this score point, the "writer's voice" is clear and consistent—the catcher's mitt is brought to life and shown to be mortal, even to produce a legacy! Organization is strong and there is a sense of fluency. Competent use of language certainly adds to the integrity of the piece. There are few errors in grammar and conventions.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

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Three weeks ago I was board in my house. It was raining. I was throwing a baseball into my catchers mitt. Suddenly, my catchers mitt was alive! I said "wow"! My catchers mitt was starting to talk. It said "hi Nick" I said "are you real"? It said "of course". After a while I realized why it came to life.

ESSAY CONTINUED:

The next day I had a baseball game. I was starting catcher. I didn't want to catch with an alive catchers mitt, but I had to catch. In warm ups my mitt said "ow" alot. I said that I was sorry I had to play catcher. It got used to it. It was the bottom of the ninth ining, there was two outs and the bases were loaded. I was still playing catcher. There was a full count and the score was 4-3 us. Suddenly the man on third base started to steel home! I had the ball in my mitt. The guy slid right into my mitt and he was out! We won! My catchers-mitt got hurt and it died. Now I

APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

could only play catch and play in a
game with the mitt. I'll never forget
those two days.

The End

GRADE THREE SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 4

CRITERIA:

Presents relevant ideas and develops them clearly and fairly well; is generally well organized throughout; has generally well-formed sentences; uses language fairly well; has relatively few serious, intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

I would pick my American Girl Doll. Her name is Kirstin. She has blond hair and blue eyes. She comes from Sweeden. One day she asked me if I could go to Sweeden with her. I said "Sure, I would love to come!" The next day we went on an airplane. Nobody knew we were gone. Finally the next day we were in Sweeden. We saw her Mama, Papa, and her two brothers. We saw that her parents had a boat. They took us in their boat on a beautiful lake. It was fun! After that we had lunch. I taught them how to cook macoroni and cheese. Then, for supper we had something that Sweedish people always eat. It was very good! Finally, it was time for bed. Me and Kirstin slept in the same room. The next morning we had eggs for breakfast. Then me and Kirstin enjoyed our last day in Sweeden. We left that afternoon. It was very sad to leave because it was very fun to be there. Me and Kirstin cried on the plane. (But not too much!) When we got home Kirstin was very tired. Then the next thing I knew Kirstin was a doll again!

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of a third grader's writing that meets Rhode Island's writing standard. Here, the writer develops an account of a whirlwind adventure with what would seem to be a favorite doll. Details of the adventure are sufficiently developed to form an evenly wrought, if sparse narrative: doll comes to life, we go on an airplane, arrive in Sweden, etc. The writing is well organized, and a sense of the writer's presence can be felt in a distinctive closing: "... It was very sad to leave ... Me and Kirstin cried on the plane (But not too much!)." Overall, there are few errors in grammar and conventions.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

I would pick my American Girl Doll. Her name is Kirstin. She has blond hair and blue eyes. She comes from Sweeden. One day she asked me if I could go to Sweeden with her. I said "Sure, I would love to come!" The next day we went on an airplane. Nobody knew we were gone. Finally the next day we were in Sweeden. We saw her Mama, Papa, and her two brothers. We saw that her parents had a boat. They took us in their boat on a beautiful lake. It was fun! After that we had lunch. I taught them how

ESSAY CONTINUED:

to cook macaroni and cheese. Then, for supper we had something that Swedish people always eat. It was very good! Finally, it was time for bed. Me and Kirstin slept in the same room. The next morning we had eggs for breakfast. Then me and Kirstin enjoyed our last day in Sweden. We left that afternoon. It was very sad to leave because it was very fun to be there. Me and Kirstin cried on the plane. (But not too much!) When we got home Kirstin was very tired. Then the next thing I knew Kirstin was a doll again!

APPENDIX A

GRADE THREE SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 3

CRITERIA:

Presents some relevant ideas fairly clearly and gives some support; shows some sense of organization; has generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately; may contain some serious errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

Hulcks big adventer

The toys name is Hulck.

He is 5 inches long, and 3 inches wide. Hulck has a green body, darck green nales, and darck green hear. He also has a yellow tank top, and perple panse. When I started playing with him He came alive. Who? Hulck became alive. He started his day off with scrap meatal and he also had it for lunch. When he got outside my dog Genny started chasing him But Hulck almost brock Genny's leg. Then we played catch with my football. He alwase got hit with it. I tried riding Hulck on my bick but he ceped falling off. By the time it was super time Hulck was plastic. THE END

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student work at the "3" level. The writer introduces some relevant ideas and presents them clearly enough to form an account of an adventure with a toy that came to life. Ideas are reasonably well organized, but errors in sentence formation and mechanics and weak transitions between sentences create a "choppy" overall effect. On balance, though, use of language is adequate for this score point.

ESSAY:

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APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

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alwase got hit with it. I tried
riding Hulck on my bick but
he ceped falling off. By the
time it was super time Hulck
was plastic. THE END

GRADE THREE SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 2

CRITERIA:

Gives some relevant ideas, but they are unclear or barely developed; shows little sense of organization; lacks sentence control; uses language poorly; probably contains serious errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

My Sissters Doll

My Sissters Doll wers Dark Pink Shorts. She Has White Skin and White Hair. She Has Buleyes She has pink Shoes and a little Bit white on Her Shoes. And I give her clots and Her name is cricket. If She was real I woud take her a bath and read her a Story. Before She goes to Bed I woud take good care of her.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student work at the “2” level. The piece is very brief, yet there is some sense of narrative structure: the doll is described, and a bedtime ritual recounted. There is some sense of organization in a very weak beginning and end, but fluency is not possible in such sparse, error-ridden text. Errors in sentence formation and mechanics are very intrusive.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

My Sisters Doll

My Sisters Doll wears
Dark Pink Shorts. She
Has White Skin and White
Hair. She Has Buleyes
She has pink shoes and a little
Bit White on Her Shoes. and
I give her clots and
Her name is cricket. If
She was real I would
take her a bath and
read her a Story. Before
She goes to Bed I would
take good care of her.

GRADE THREE SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 1

CRITERIA:

Probably contains serious and persistent errors; is incoherent or underdeveloped.

ESSAY:

I woke up one day my Dallas cowboy doll was talking to me.

At first it was cool.

But then he tride to boss me aroud so I tide him up and I threw him away and the necst day I couldn't beleive it he was back.

I gave it to my Dog.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student work at the "1" level. The writer presents an appropriate response to the prompt and forms an intelligible, if minimal, scenario: a doll comes to life—"At first it was cool." But matters change abruptly. The piece is underdeveloped and there are serious errors in sentence formation and mechanics.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

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my Dallas cowboy doll
was talking to me.

At first it was cool.

But then he tride
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couldn't beleive it he
was back.

I gave it to my Dog.

GRADE SEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 6

CRITERIA:

Presents thoughtful ideas and develops them logically, fully and clearly; is very well organized from beginning to end; has a strong command of sentence structure; uses language effectively; has few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). A “6” essay may be distinguished by features such as making insightful observations, using rich details, or creating an effective scene or mood.

ESSAY:

I think that Spring is the most unique time of year. It is like a “rebirth” of all dead things. After a long, tough winter, foliage starts to regrow and the warm air awakes the hibernating animals to come out of their “hiding.” The softball and baseball seasons begin again on both television screens and on local baseball diamonds at the park or in our own backyards, With spring comes the opening of pools and beaches nationwide.

The most “colorful” part of Spring is the regrowth of plants and flowers. I especially love to tend to my gardens and I also enjoy seeing new seeds budding into what could grow to be a beautiful flow. The tall trees begin to grow back their dead leaves and maybe grow a little bit taller yet. How beautiful, Spring is!

The warm sun greets everyone for a new day. Seeing the suns at dawn puts a smile on my face to start the morning. The sun and warm air doesn’t bring only me from my bed, but it also awakes hibernating animals to “Come out; take your coat off and stay awhile.” How awakening, Spring is!

Pleasure is also a large part of Spring. Softball and baseball starts. Pools and beaches are opened. Softball is one of my favorite sports and this year I will be hopefully playing for the school team and I will be playing Little League. I play second base and center field and I usually bat first. I love to swim and ride waves at the beach. In Spring, I will begin to do just that. How much fun, Spring is!

One personal event that occurs in Spring is my birthday. Although not celebrated worldwide (Though it should be!), May fourth is an occasion in my own life. How joyous, Spring is!

As you can see, Spring is an important season of the year for me. Seeing the warm air and sun greet each new day puts an immediate smile on my face which stays there all day long until I fall asleep at night. Who knows, it may stay there all night.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the “6” level. What distinguishes this essay is a consistent sense of the writer’s voice. Details are richly developed, and observations formed blend together into a unified personal vision. The writer is very much aware of his or her audience—a conversational and sometimes humorous tone tends to persuade the reader of the genuineness of feelings expressed. Clear control of sentence formation, grammar, and mechanics form part of the integrity of the writing.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

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ESSAY CONTINUED:

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APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

stay there all night.

GRADE SEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 5

CRITERIA:

Presents good ideas and develops them logically, fully and clearly; is very well organized throughout; has a generally strong command of sentence structure; uses language well; has relatively few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

Spring is a time of year that is exhilarating. Its the change of weather really, and the feeling that everything is coming alive again.

During the winter months the earth has been covered in snow on frozen ground. It is all dazzling for a while the glittering icicles, the crunch of packed snow beneath your boots and the twinkling of ice covered branches above your head make it so. Then the cold sets in and you long for warmer days where the sun will shine brightly and not just be a cold, hard, mettalic sphere in the sky.

When spring comes along it thaws the earth and flowers pop up. Because of this I am filled with a sense of new life.

After spring comes summer. Summer is pleasant with long, hot, lazy days where I can do anything. Theres plenty of time to go swimming or just to hang out with friends.

Soon summer turns to autumn and abundant colors of reds, browns, and oranges blanket the ground. The days get shorter and it seems I am saying goodbye to wonderful memories of warm days.

Spring is special to me because it awakens my mind and body. Every creature comes out of hibernation and I feel that the warm weather is calling me, too. I don't mind the cold, sharp nip of the wind it just adds to the feeling of being one with nature. Theres a little tune I used to sing to myself when I felt spring in my bones and it goes like this "When the robin takes a hop and the buds begin to pop everybody knows its spring today."

Childhood memories also have a lot to do with how I feel about spring. When I was young my mother would take my brother, sister and I raspberry picking or for walks in the woods. Where we lived there was a winding brook with weeping willows dotting the banks. On crisp mornings we used to wander these woods and just explore. The smell of spring lifts my spirits, the warmth of spring picks up my feet and makes them skip, and the feeling that I am very very alive fills my heart with contentment.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "5" level. Strong, appropriate images are formed to build a clear vision of the writer's "favorite time of the year." The quality of imagery is a strong point of this essay. The writer creates impressions that place spring in relation to fall, winter and summer, and although this technique leads to a slight loss of focus, the overall effect is that of a flowing, balanced essay. There is clear control of sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics that contributes to fluency.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

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ESSAY CONTINUED:

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APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

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GRADE SEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 4

CRITERIA:

Presents relevant ideas and develops them clearly and fairly well; is generally well organized throughout; has generally well-formed sentences; uses language fairly well; has relatively few serious, intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

My favorite time of the year is summer vacation. My family and I stay at my beach house, located in Touisset Point Country Club – Warren, RI. It is located on the Mount Hope Bay. We have owned it for thirteen years. We have easy access to Newport; Barrington; Bristol; and Fall River by either car or boat.

This is clearly my favorite time of the year because I have so much fun! The variety of activities include waterskiing, jetskiing, fishing, swimming, wakeboarding, kneeboarding, and tubing. There is a basketball court, tennis court, field, playground, and a clubhouse. The club privately owns many boating docks.

My average day in Touisset begins at 10:00 AM. I wake up and get ready for tennis lessons. The lesson is from 11:00–12:00 Noon. I come home for lunch and get my bathing suit on. Then I may go on a motorboat or just go swimming with my friends. At about 4:00 PM I will take a shower. I will eat dinner and go hang out with all of my friends.

Later at night we might play manhunt or watch the Fall River or Bristol’s beautiful display of fireworks. We may even go to a party at the clubhouse.

In the long run I highly appreciate this house. My parents work hard to keep it up. It costs a “pretty penny” to own two houses all year around. If I did not have a summer house I would be bored out of my mind. I would be sitting at a boring swim club in Cumberland. I am extremely grateful to have a house on the water. My family and I have made a lot of close friends (there) over the years.

My beach house has inspired me to buy waterfront property as an adult. I want my children to have the same opportunity and childhood memory as I did. I also want them to appreciate how much hard work is needed to keep it up.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of a seventh grade student’s writing that meets Rhode Island’s writing standard. A clear view of the writer’s feelings about summer—and his or her appreciation of fortunate circumstances—are presented in a reasonably coherent and well-developed essay. Organization by way of paragraphs is not very effective, and there are some shifts of focus—but, in general, language is used fairly well and there are few errors in sentence formation, grammar, or mechanics.

APPENDIX A

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ESSAY CONTINUED:

friends.

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APPENDIX A

GRADE SEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 3

CRITERIA:

Presents some relevant ideas fairly clearly and gives some support; shows some sense of organization; has generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately; may contain some serious errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

Favorite time of the year

My favorite time of the year is summer time. Summer is the best time of the year because no school, its hot, and no school. Plus when summer hits you go to the beach or a pool and hang out with all your friends. Summer is also the best time to play your favorite sport anywhere. I also like summer because girls wear short short skirts and bikines.

When summer comes you don't have to get up and go to school. There are some bad things about summer there are mosquitos and the bees come out and sometimes it get's to hot to even go anywhere. You can get on the buses for free on some hot days, and summer is a good time to go bike riding in the park with your friends. Summer is also when you get to wear shorts and short sleeve shirts. These are the good things about summer.

Swimming is still the best thing about summer. Only because I am a good swimmer that's why I like swimming so much. Me and my friends always go to the pool. Also in the summer we have water and land races on bikes or on foot. Summer time is also good for barbaue in your yard with your friends and family.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "3" level. Relevant ideas are presented with some clarity and developed sufficiently to support the topic. Organization is somewhat rudimentary: ideas are clear, but developed unevenly and arranged in a way that detracts from coherence. Control of sentence formation is a particular problem that at times becomes intrusive. Use of language can be considered on the low side of adequate for this score point.

ESSAY:

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When summer comes you don't have to get up and go to school. There are some bad things about summer there are mosquitos and the bees come out and sometimes it get's to hot to even go anywhere. You can get on the buses for free on some hot days, and summer is a good time to go bike riding in the park with your friends. Summer is also when you get to wear shorts and short sleeve shirts. There are the good things about summer.

Swimming is still the best thing about summer. Only because I am a good swimmer that's why I like swimming so much. Me and my friends always go to the

APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

pool. Also in the summer we have water and
land races on bikes or on foot. Summer time is
also good for barbeque in your yard with your
friends and family

GRADE SEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 2

CRITERIA:

Gives some relevant ideas, but they are unclear or barely developed; shows little sense of organization; lacks sentence control; uses language poorly; probably contains serious errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

"Summer"

My favorite time of the year is summer. Because I get the longest vacation of the year. I go on vacation to camp or to D.R. I hang out with my friends and do what ever I want. I go to the beach Pools and Places. And it is the only time of the year where I could relax with nothing to do. Not having to deal with homework, teachers, and Grades. You also get a nice suntan at the beach. You do lots of fun things that you can do in all the season's because of the kind of weater. You can see all the flowers and all the fruits and vegetables growing. You can say that don't have nothing to do or where to go. Because there are lots of places to go.

I Love Summer.

THE END

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "2" level. In this response, the writer cites a number of aspects of his or her "favorite time of the year," but details are weakly developed and organization of ideas is "listy" and haphazard. Any of the attributes cited might have been appropriate points of departure toward fuller and more directed development of the topic, but such opportunities are missed. Facility of language is weak: numerous errors in sentence formation interfere with meaning.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

"Summer"

My favorite time of the year is Summer. Because I get the longest vacation of the year I go on vacation to camp or to D.R. I hang out with my friends and do what ever I want. I go to the beach Pools and Places. And it is the only time of the year where I could relax with nothing to do. Not having to deal with homework, teachers, and Grades. You also get a nice Suntan at the beach. You do lots of fun things that you can do in all the seasons because of the kind of weater. You can see all the flowers and all the fruits and vegetables growing. You can say that don't have nothing to do or where to go.

GRADE SEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 1

CRITERIA:

Probably contains serious and persistent errors; is incoherent or underdeveloped.

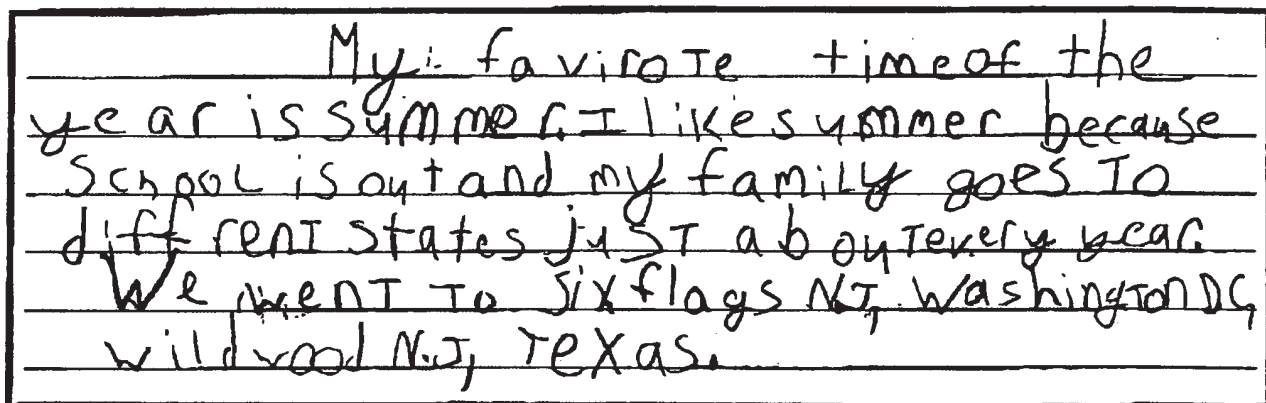
ESSAY:

My favirote time of the year is summer. I like summer because school is out and my family goes to diffrent states just about every year.

We went to Six flags NJ, Washington D.C, wildwood N.J, Texas.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "1" level. The response is underdeveloped. It addresses the prompt by providing a minimal amount of raw information: favorite time of year and why. The writing is not incoherent, as there is too little text to allow an opportunity for organizational flaws. Discounting the final sentence, errors in grammar and conventions do not pose intrusive problems.

ESSAY:

My favirote time of the
year is summer. I like summer because
School is out and my family goes to
diffrent states just about every year.
We went to Six flags NJ, Washington DC,
wildwood N.J, TEXAS.

APPENDIX A

GRADE ELEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 6

CRITERIA:

Writing at this level establishes a clear stance or position and develops it fully and effectively; includes perceptive details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support; is very well organized and provides appropriate closure; shows an awareness of audience by anticipating concerns; uses language effectively; has few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). A "6" essay may be distinguished by features such as using a range of strategies or engaging the reader by creating a context or persona.

ESSAY:

Creative Balance

Imagine a school completely devoid of artwork — a bland monotony of desks and chalkboards. It lacks its creative spark and fades into a certain ordinary dullness. Although we often take the art around us for granted, truly it is a unique and integral part of our school environment. The visual demonstrations of art that are poured before our senses each day, in the form of murals on walls and music emanating for chorus rooms, are a major stimulating factor in our world of high school. There is strong reason to work through money issues in order to preserve the arts program in our high school and along with it to preserve balance in the mind, inspiration and the aesthetic appeal that all go hand-in-hand.

The arts allow forms of expression that cannot be conveyed in the more regimented, typical class structures that exist. Science and math are sure to always be in place to appease the critical thinking left-side of the brain, so the arts need to be in place to satisfy the more creative flare of the other half of the brain. Adding a painting class, a band practice, or involvement in a theater production into a person's daily curriculum is something that is irreplaceable by any other purely academic mode of learning. These activities add an artistic balance to the mental well-roundedness and equilibrium that everyone seeks to attain. A creative base can often be the spark in a person that appeals to their mind and challenges them to delve farther into their academic life.

There is something inspiring about viewing still-lives in a hallway display case or attending a band concert or play performance. These things trigger a fascination in the mind and surface new challenges. Drawing is a challenge to re-create the world as one sees it, while band, chorus and theater troops encompass the same team spirit and bonding held within athletic team sports. A creative stimulation coming from acting in the arts, almost exactly parallels the athletic stimulation of sports activities. Different people find sparks of interest in different areas, therefore it is essential that opportunities remain open in all arenas. Sports are a beneficial and constructive way to channel physical and mental energy, while the arts are an ideal and very decorative way to channel creative instincts. The arts are an extremely positive outlet.

It is crucial that the arts program at our high school remains intact in order to preserve the well-rounded expression, inspiration and visual appeal that is such an integral part of our curriculum. Before we remove funding to this wonderful program, remember the many benefits that losing it will cost us. The paintings would come off the walls, the theater would become desolate and the music would fade away. On the other hand, if the arts can be preserved then so can our artistic flare and inspiration and we can obtain the essential high of creative balance.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "6" level. This is a well-crafted essay that is distinguished by a good control of language. The writer establishes a clear stance at the outset and proceeds to support the topic through use of relevant details. What is most notable about this essay is the stylistic approach chosen by the writer: there is a quality of rhetorical "loftiness" that although sometimes undermined by awkward mistakes, provides a certain "energy" that supports persuasiveness. Aside from some errors in usage and a few awkward sentences, errors in grammar and conventions are few and nonintrusive. In all, this is a competent and attainable example of the score point.

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APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

The arts allow forms of expression that cannot be conveyed in the more regimented, typical class structures that exist. Science and math are sure to always be in place to appease the critical thinking left-side of the brain, so the arts need to be in place to satisfy the more creative flare of the other half of the brain. Adding a painting class, a band practice, or involvement in a theater production into a person's daily curriculum is something that is irreplaceable by any other purely academic mode of learning. These activities add an artistic balance to the mental well-roundedness and equilibrium that everyone seeks to attain. A creative base can often be the spark in a person that appeals to their mind and challenges them to delve further into their academic life.

There is something inspiring about viewing still-lives in a hallway display case or attending a band concert or play performance. These things trigger a fascination in the mind and surface new challenges. Drawing is a challenge to re-create the world as one sees it, while band, chorus and theater troops encompass the same team spirit and bonding held within athletic team sports. A creative stimulation

coming from acting in the arts, almost exactly parallels the athletic stimulation of sports activities. Different people find sparks of interest in different areas, therefore it is essential that opportunities remain open in all arenas. Sports are a beneficial and constructive way to channel physical and mental energy, while the arts are an ideal and very decorative way to channel creative instincts. The arts are an extremely positive outlet.

It is crucial that the arts program at our highschool remains intact in order to preserve the well-rounded expression, inspiration and visual appeal that is such an integral part of our curriculum. Before we remove funding to this wonderful program, remember the many benefits that losing it will cost us. The paintings would come off the walls, the theater would become desolate and the music would fade away. On the other hand, if the arts can be preserved then so can our artistic flare and inspiration and we can obtain the essential light of creative balance.

APPENDIX A

GRADE ELEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 5

CRITERIA:

Writing at this level establishes a clear stance or position and develops it fully; includes strong, relevant details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support; is well organized and provides closure; shows an awareness of audience by anticipating concerns; uses language very well; has relatively few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

When faced with such a large decision, I would need a to think long and hard about the end result and the lives it would affect. In the situation at hand the administrators, whom I do not envy in even the slightest degree, must choose a program to cut. I, on the other hand, must choose one to save. Though easier and less influencial, it's still a hard decision. At first I was torn between the arts and computers. Both of which hold individual benefits. Since I can not save both of the programs, I am forced to say that the computer labs are the most important of the two. There is no denying that computers and technology are a big part of our lives today. Every civilization has experimented with technology and using their knowledge to make life easier. Had it not been for those ambisious cavemen, we might not have wheels or fire today. You'll notice that those "inventions" had lasting affects on the world, as will computers. They are not only the present but more importantly, the future. Our future. More and more we become more reliant on our computer and robot friends. Just one example is the automobile. How many cars are made by hand today? Not many. It is a rare occasion, like this one, that we break out the pencil and paper. Every high school student has heard the required, "2 pages typed, double space, Times New Roman font." All papers and reports are formal and neat and uniform. This makes life easier in that you can return to your previously typed document and rearrange, correct, and even double check grammar with the click of a button. This may not be as well received in that people rely more on the "spell-checker" than their own mind, but it is still helpful.

If we look at employment today we see an overwhelming number of computers. It's not only secretaries and their typewriters like the fifties. Anywhere from Mechanical Engineers to McDonald's cashiers and in between, there are computers. You buy a product at a store and the clerk either types in the scan number on her keypad or swipes it across an even more impressive laser-like sensor. In no time the correct price is zapped to the front of the store and printed on your receipt. Some people even use a credit card to pay for their groceries, clothes, etc. They just run it through the slot on the side of, wait...what is that again...? Oh yes, another computer!

Computers and a basic knowledge of them is needed to survive and be sucessful in a technology based world. Knowledge is important but using that knowledge is key. People may know where the keys on a keyboard are, but do they know what they all do? Probably not. That is why it is so important to teach young people the skills they will need in the future. The minds of these students will one day run our country, as well as others. They will control our government, industries, schools, take care of our children, and even pump our gas. All of these respectable professions require computers. When these administrators consider the way they could be changing the future, they should think carefully and logically. This is a very important decision and should not be taken lightly.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "5" level. The essay presents a clear position that is supported by strong development of the topic. Details are well chosen and provide strong support of the central idea. The writing is fluent, and awareness of audience is evident in a style that is both conversational and to the point. Organization is strong throughout, although transitions between paragraphs could be better. Facility of language is superior, despite some preference for the passive voice. Errors in grammar and conventions are few and nonintrusive.

ESSAY:

When faced with such a large decision, I would need a to think long and hard about the end result and the lives it would affect. In the situation at hand the administrators, whom I do not envy in even the slightest degree, must choose a program to cut. I, on the other hand, must choose one to save. Though easier and less influential, it's still a hard decision. At first I was torn between the arts and computers. Both of which hold individual benefits. Since I can not save both of the programs, I am forced to say that the computer holds one the most important of the two. There is no denying that computers and technology are a big part of our lives today. Every civilization has experimented with technology and using their knowledge to make life easier. Had it not been for those ambitious cave men, we might not have wheels or fire today. You'll notice that those "inventions" had lasting effects on the world, as will computers. They are not only the present but, more importantly, the future. Our future. More and more we become more reliant on our computers and robot friends. Just one example is the automobile. How many cars are made by hand today? Not many. It is a rare occasion, like this one, that we break out the pencil and paper. Every high school student has heard the required, "2 pages typed, double space, Times New Roman font". All papers and reports are formal and neat and uniform. This makes life easier in that you can return to your previously typed document and rearrange, correct, and even double check grammar with the click of a button. This may not be as well received in

APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

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Computers and a basic knowledge of them is needed to survive and be successful in a technology based world. Knowledge is important but using that knowledge is key. People may know where the keys on a keyboard are, but do they know what they all do? Probably not. That is why it is so important to teach young people the skills they will need in the future. The minds of these students will one day run our country, as well as others. They will control our government, industries, schools, take care of our children, and even pump our gas. All of these respectable professions require computers. When these administrators consider the way they could be changing the future, they should think carefully and logically. This is a very important decision and should not be taken lightly.

GRADE ELEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 4

CRITERIA:

Writing at this level establishes a clear stance or position and develops it well; includes relevant details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support; is generally well organized and may provide closure; may show an awareness of audience; has generally well-formed sentences; uses language well; has relatively few serious, intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

In my opinion, I'd say that the most important program to a school would be computer lab classes. I think they're the most useful and practice classes a high school student could take.

All throughout the media, you hear how computers and all their capabilities are allowing people to take care of things faster, easier, and more efficiently.

The internet is helping people do their jobs online without them having to leave home. For instance, someone that's interested in buying or selling stocks can do that on different websites. A person can make a living on advertising products they have invented or that they're selling online.

Many people, like accountants, sit in a cubicle all day and type stuff out. Classes like Microsoft Word, Excel, and Typing can give them some of the skills they will use to get their job.

Communication is very big now. You can talk to a business partner on the other side of the world, and save a lot of money on the phone bill in the process.

Architects and graphic designers use the computer to make Spreadsheets and blueprints for a project they could be working on. There is a new computer program which allows an architect to draw their building out in a very good quality, 3D drawing. Through a camera's view, they take their clients through the building when it's completed.

Another field of work is computer programming. This job is, and will be, very much in demand. Most people have no clue on this job, but there are computer classes that will give a good base on what to do.

All these jobs and other benefits I mentioned pay very well and make the world much more efficient and easier to work in. The skills you need for them you can learn in computer classes. I asked myself what the pros and cons were for each category, and I thought the computer classes prepare you for a world that revolves around computers all day. I'm sure there are many other good things circulated around computer work, but I don't have enough time to go through them all.

ANALYSIS:

This paper meets Rhode Island's writing standard at grade 11. The essay presents a developed argument in favor of keeping computer lab classes. Organization of ideas is sensible, and although paragraphing is somewhat overused as an organizational technique, ideas form and flow within the framework of a clear opening and a discernible, yet weaker, conclusion. The various points made are well supported with relevant details. Overall, the piece is coherent and reasonably persuasive. Language is used competently. A few errors in usage can be seen, but none is intrusive.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

In my opinion, I'd say that the most important program to a school would be computer lab classes. I think they're the most useful and practical classes a high school student could take.

All throughout the media, you hear how computers and all their capabilities are allowing people to take care of things faster, easier, and more efficiently.

The internet is helping people do their jobs online without them having to leave home. For instance, someone that's interested in buying or selling stocks can do that on different websites. A person can make a living on advertising products they have invented or that they're selling online.

Many people, like accountants, sit in a cubicle all day and type stuff out. Classes like Microsoft Word, Excel, and Typing can give them some of the skills they will use to get their job.

Communication is very big now. You can talk to a business partner on the other side of the world, and save a lot of money on the phone bill in the process.

Architects and graphic designers use the computer to make spreadsheets and blueprints

ESSAY CONTINUED:

for a project they could be working on. There is a new computer program which allows an architect to draw their building out in a very good quality, 3D drawing. Through a cameras view, they take their clients through the building when it's completed.

Another field of work is computer programming. This job is, and will be, very much in demand. Most people have no clue on this job, but there are computer classes that will give a good base on what to do.

All these jobs and other benefits I mentioned pay very well and make the world much more efficient and easier to work in. The skills you need for them you can learn in computer classes. I asked myself what the pros and cons were for each catagorie, and I thought the computer classes prepare you for a world that revolves around computers all day. I'm sure there are many other good things circulated around computer work, but I don't have enough time to go through them all.

APPENDIX A

GRADE ELEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 3

CRITERIA:

Writing at this level establishes a stance or position; provides some development; includes some details, reasons, examples, anecdotes, or other support (may include irrelevant or contradictory information); shows some sense of organization that may provide closure; shows little awareness of audience; has generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately; may contain some serious errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

The program in school that shouldn't be dropped would have to be the sports program. Sport programs keeps young adolescents out of trouble by having practices after school, games on weekends, and or pep rallies on weekends or at school. There's a wide variety of sports from, football, track, softball, baseball, dance, hockey, basketball, tennis, volleyball, soccer, ect. Anyone of different shapes, sizes, backround, and race can attend. Some may be better than others but their all equal people. It may bring out the good conduct, good sportsmanship, team work, can get you in shape, and it also can bring the good out in you! You could also get scholarships when you graduate from highschool so you can go to college. Then you can end up anywhere after that, you may even become pro. An example of getting a scholarship to college would be my cousin. She's a senior in highschool and she's the basketball teams center. She just got a full scholarship to Merrimack for basketball for at least four years or more. That's living proof that sports can help out your life. Now the only thing she has to worry about is keeping her marks up because she also wants to be a lawyer, even if the basketball career works out! In my final words of wisdom, I feel that sports should not be eliminated to save money. If they eliminate that, seventy-five percent of the school will be getting into fights, robbery, or mabey even harming another human. By that statement, people should feel that sports is not the program that should be eliminated to save money.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "3" level. In this essay, the writer takes a reasonably clear position against the elimination of sports programs. The writing goes beyond the qualities of a bare list— multiple ideas are presented with sufficient details to give some support to the central idea or position taken. In addition, the writer includes an anecdote to support his or her stance. Weakness in sentence formation and some errors in mechanics do not become intrusive, but use of language is still no better than rudimentary.

ESSAY:

The program in school that shouldn't be dropped would have to be the sports program. Sport programs keeps young adolescents out of trouble by having practices after school, games on weekends, and or pep rallies on weekends or at school. There's a wide variety of sports from, football, track, softball, baseball, dance, hockey, basketball, tennis, volleyball, soccer, ect. Anyone of different shapes, sizes, back-roun, and race can attend. Some may be better than others but their all equal people. It may bring out the good conduct, good sportsmanship, team work, can get you in shape, and it also can bring the good out in you! You could also get scholarships when you graduate from highschool so you can go to college. Then you can end up anywhere after that, you may even become pro. An example of getting a scholarship to college would be my cousin. She's a senior in highschool and she's the basketball teams center. She just got a full scholarship to Merrimack for basketball for at least four years or more. That's living proof that sports can help out your life. Now the only thing she has to worry about is keeping her marks up because she

APPENDIX A

ESSAY CONTINUED:

also wants to be a lawyer, even if the basketball career works out! In my final words of wisdom, I feel that sports should not be eliminated to save money. If they eliminate that, seventy five percent of the school will be getting into fights, robbery, or maybe even harming another human. By that statement, people should feel that sports is not the program that should be eliminated to save money.

GRADE ELEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 2

CRITERIA:

Writing at this level may present an unclear or changing stance or position; selects some appropriate information, but it is barely developed or contradictory; shows little sense of organization; shows little or no awareness of audience; has inconsistent sentence control; uses language poorly; probably contains serious errors in grammar and conventions.

ESSAY:

I think sports should be saved because it is a lot more popular than art or computer. Sports bring attention to our school so it will be a well known school. Sports help to keep kids out of trouble and is very good exercise. Sports help get students more involved. There are many different boys and girls sports to take part in. It gives students a reason to try and keep their grades up so they may participate. Many colleges offer scholarships for programs such as sports. Sports teach good sportsmanship and teamwork. For some sports will eventually be their career. There are sports writers, trainers, coaches and many other careers to do with sports. Sports give kids a way to make new friends and keeps kids from dropping out as if there isn't enough reasons already.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "2" level. The writer offers a number of reasons why he or she thinks sports programs should not be eliminated. The piece is organized entirely as a list: barely developed ideas are set out in a point-by-point arrangement that works against a sense of coherence. Since no single idea is developed with sufficient supporting details, the writer's stance seems unclear. Weak sentence control and errors in grammar and conventions contribute to an overall poor use of language.

APPENDIX A

ESSAY:

I think sports should be saved because it is a lot more popular than art or computer. Sports bring attention to our school so it will be a well known school. Sports help to keep kids out of trouble and is very good exercise. Sports help get students more involved. There are many different boys and girls sports to take part in. It gives students a reason to try and keep their grades up so they may participate. Many colleges offer scholarships for programs such as sports. Sports teach good sportsmanship and teamwork. For some sports will eventually be their career. There are sports writers, trainers, coaches and many other careers to do with sports. Sports give kids a way to make new friends and keeps kids from dropping out as if there isn't enough reasons already.

GRADE ELEVEN SAMPLE ESSAY: SCORE OF 1

CRITERIA:

Writing at this level presents a stance or position that is underdeveloped, unfocused, or incoherent; may show minimal organization or sentence control; probably contains serious and persistent errors in language, grammar, and conventions.

ESSAY:

Dear school adiministrators,

I think it would be wrong to terminate any programs in our school. I am surtant all of the programs will either Better our students or prepair them for Bigger things. I think we can come to a understanding on this! Instead of Dropping a activity we can cut back on some of the others but enough to save money to build the other programs back up. In closing I hope you think about it and can come to the same terms I have.

ANALYSIS:

This paper is an example of student writing at the "1" level. The response presents a position that is vague and underdeveloped. The writer takes a somewhat different approach to the prompt by stating that no programs should be eliminated, but does not develop the notion of cutting back some to save others. At this level of topic development, ideas are often fragmentary—here, what can be recognized as a central idea is lost in incoherence. Sentence control is weak and errors in usage and spelling are serious and persistent.

ESSAY:

Dear school adiministrators,

I think it would be wrong to terminate any Programs in our school. I am surtant all of the programs will either Better our students or prepair them for Bigger things. I think we can come to a understanding on this! Instead of Dropping a activity we can cut back on some of the others but enough to save money to build the other programs back up. In closing I hope you think about it. and can come to the same terms I have.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B: 2001 SCORING TEAMS

GRADE THREE

Bouclin, Marilynn – Johnston, Chief Reader
Carron, Jean – Pawtucket, Assistant Chief Reader
Velicer, Sue – Rhode Island Department of Education
Desmarais, Ginny – Measured Progress

Table Leaders

Blais, Elaine – Scituate
Cliff, Linda – W. Warwick
Cordega, Loraine – Barrington
Fanning, Amy – Lincoln
Manganelli, Judith – W. Warwick
Ozbek, Susan – Scituate
Paesano, Beverly – Rhode Island Writing Project
Petrocelli, Carolyn – Jamestown
Sclama, Jane – Bristol/Warren

Readers

Azevedo, Hally – Tiverton
Baccala, Joan – Providence
Barber, Sandra – Cranston
Blythe, Cindy – Barrington
Braun, Denise – N. Kingstown
Bruno, Kerry – Coventry
Carbone, Gina – Providence
Colvin, Bethanne – Scituate
Costa, Cathie – Ex.-W. Greenwich
Creamer, Paula – Johnston
Daley, Tom – W. Warwick
Delaney, Elaine – Central Falls
DePedro, Ann – Providence
DiBara, Sue – Johnston
Emerson, Susan – W. Warwick
Facha, Lori – Johnston
Furtado, Barbara – Smithfield
Gallagher, Michelle – Coventry
Gaudet, Shelah – Smithfield
Glenn, Carrie – Providence
Goldberg, Sarah – Lincoln
Gould, Cindy – Scituate
Guido, Terry – Jamestown

Hass, Jennifer – Coventry
Haughey, Kimberly – Providence
Hysko, Carol – Woonsocket
Iannelli, Julie – Coventry
Katz, Mandy – Providence
Kilby, Ruth – Tiverton
Kolling, Deborah – Coventry
Laplante, Beverly – Woonsocket
Lemoie, Muriel – Lincoln
Leonetti, Denise – Scituate
Maxham, Judith – N. Providence
McMahon, Ann Marie – Johnston
Mixer, Darlene – Pawtucket
O'Connor, Gail – Middletown
O'Hare, Nancy – Foster
Palazzo, Angela – W. Warwick
Paolilli, Jennifer – Scituate
Penza, Nancy – Barrington
Poole, Rebecca – Foster
Raptakis, Donna – Coventry
Reed, Harriet – RI School for The Deaf
Reed, John – RI School for The Deaf
Riecke, Holly – Coventry
Roberts, Stephanie – Woonsocket
Ronan, Betsy – Tiverton
Ruggiero, Rondelle – Johnston
Ryan, Robin – Lincoln
Scampoli, Kathy – Providence
Schimmel, Terry – Chariho
Schindler, Eileen – Johnston
Sears, Ruth – Portsmouth
Sherman, Lisa – W. Warwick
Skitt, Beverly – Johnston
Smith-Brian, Michael – Portsmouth
Spaight, Kimberly – Barrington
Speck, Kelly – Jamestown
Vecchione, Patricia – Johnston
Ward, Alison – Chariho
Williams, Jennifer – Scituate

APPENDIX B: 2001 SCORING TEAMS

GRADE SEVEN

Hyman, Betsy – Middletown, Chief Reader
Gannon, Rickard – URI, Assistant Chief Reader
Velicer, Sue – Rhode Island Department of Education
Desmarais, Ginny – Measured Progress

Table Leaders

Boswell, Amanda – Portsmouth
 Caruso, Sally – Bristol/Warren
 Litterst, Helen – Rhode Island School for The Deaf
 Martellino, Dale – Newport
 Meyer, Patricia – Portsmouth
 Preble, Paula – Warwick
 Ritchie, JoAnn – Chariho
 Roemer, Marjorie – Rhode Island Writing Project
 Tarpy, Patricia – Davies Career-Technical

Readers

Abbott, Lynne – UCAP
 Acciardo, Lora – Coventry
 Achilli, Dayna – Bristol/Warren
 Alviano, Louis – Johnston
 Andrews, Silvana – Chariho
 Behringer, Robin – Smithfield
 Bettez, Mary Lou – Coventry
 Chace, Shirley – Portsmouth
 Chippis, Maria – Providence
 Clunan, Sandra – Coventry
 Cotter, Shannon – New Shoreham
 Curt, Tonya – Woonsocket
 Denelle, Gayle – S. Kingstown
 Downes, Lucille – Cranston
 Drainville, Lynn – Cranston
 Evans, Robert – Bristol/Warren
 Feliz, Julia – Providence
 Genga, Katherine – RI School for The Deaf
 Goodyear, Lark – Jamestown
 Hallman, Christina – Tiverton

Hancur, Mary – Chariho
 Hayden, Susan – Cranston
 Henschel, Bonney – Chariho
 Hogan, Beth – Cranston
 Jeonnotte, Bill – Pawtucket
 Karsulavitch, Linda – Pawtucket
 Kanzin-Boyce, Marjorie – Foster-Glocester
 Kearns, Debbie – Bristol/Warren
 Killilea, Joe – UCAP
 Lalli, Jayna – Portsmouth
 Lepre, Renee – Lincoln
 Manning, Mary – S. Kingstown
 Marshall, Debby – Bristol/Warren
 McCabe, Olwyn – Providence
 McKiernan, Margaret – Bristol/Warren
 Michaels, Carrie – Woonsocket
 Milburn, Jennifer – Chariho
 Montecalvo, Lisa – N. Providence
 Noble, Margaret – S. Kingstown
 Noel, Patricia – Smithfield
 O'Malley, Jean – New Shoreham
 Onken, Cynthia – Pawtucket
 Paronzini, Manuela-Dinatale – Providence
 Petrosinelli, Diana – Cranston
 Plante, Audra – W. Warwick
 Potter, Cindy – Chariho
 Puchalski-Mascena, Mary Ann – Providence
 Schiavulli, Joseph – Cranston
 Scoliard, Nancy – Providence
 Smith, Kathy – S. Kingstown
 Thiboutot, Jeannine – Tiverton
 Thompson, Edith – Chariho
 Van Orden, Albertella – Scituate
 Volpe, Barbara – Chariho
 Wagner, Lynda – Bristol/Warren
 Wallace, Catherine – Coventry

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B: 2001 SCORING TEAMS

GRADE ELEVEN

Miner, Jeff – Warwick, Chief Reader
Kaplan, Susan – Assistant Chief Reader
Gannon, Rickard – URI, Assistant Chief Reader
Velicer, Sue – Rhode Island Department of Education
Desmarais, Ginny – Measured Progress

Table Leaders

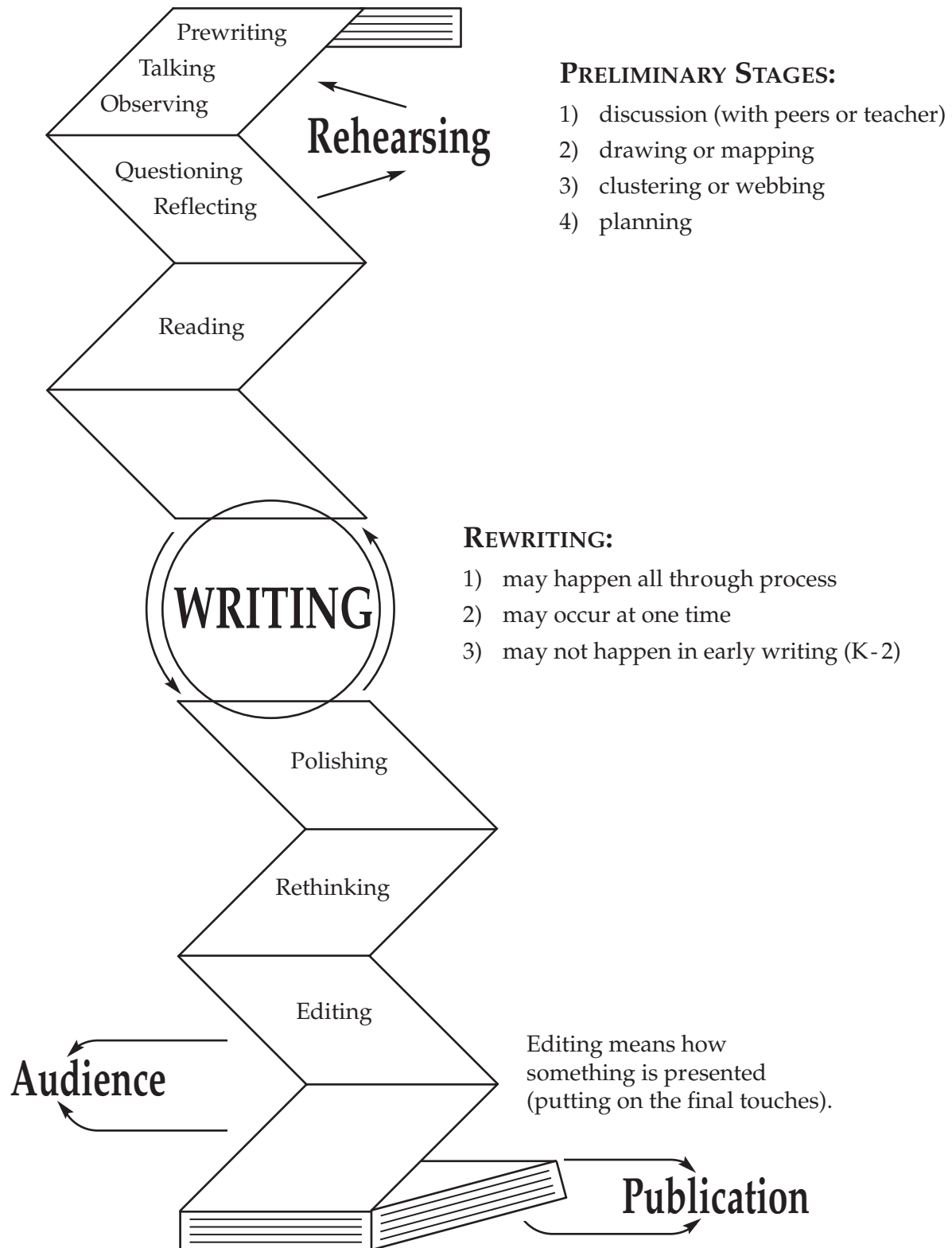
Alfano, Raymond – E. Greenwich
Arvidson, Anne – Ex.-W. Greenwich
Ayotte, Joan – Pawtucket
Boswell, Amanda – Portsmouth
Drapala, Elizabeth – Pawtucket
Kelly, Patrick – Providence
Meyer, Patricia – Portsmouth
Place, Janice – Warwick
Poor, Susan – Foster-Glocester
Vacca, Mary-Jo – Warwick

Readers

Abatiello, Janice – Coventry
Aguiar, Marie – Providence
Amaral, Linda – Providence
Anderson, Seth – Coventry
Asprinio, Rhonda – Cranston
Baxter, Diane Feole – Cranston
Blanco, Pamela – Coventry
Bonenfant, Richard – Lincoln
Buxton, Jim – S. Kingstown
Callahan, Brian – Warwick
Carlson, Erik – Warwick
Casale, Renee – Johnston
Cavanagh, Elizabeth – Ex.-W. Greenwich
Cervone, Joy – Providence
Chace, Shirley – Portsmouth
Champagne, David – Lincoln
Chipman, Joan – Coventry
Dailey, Heather – Scituate
Decrecktor, Sandy – Portsmouth

Deserres, Michelle – Lincoln
Eckert, Cheryl – Coventry
Federman, Elizabeth – Cranston
Flaherty, Maureen – New Shoreham
Foley, William – Lincoln
Frankel, Camille – Portsmouth
Gianfrocco, Jessica – Burrillville
Grundt, Amy – Scituate
Hudson, Kathy – Coventry
Lavin, Carol – S. Kingstown
Lewis, Robin – Providence
Light, Joe – Westerly
Lima, Julie – Coventry
Litterst, Helen – RI School for The Deaf
McCabe, Martha – S. Kingstown
McCormick, Alicia – Johnston
Millette, Roberta – Coventry
Mitchell, Maryanne – Lincoln
Morello, Chris – Scituate
Murphy, Mary Jane – Coventry
Myers, Jennifer – Cranston
Naylor, Lauren – Smithfield
Noble, Linda – Warwick
Palumbo, Donna – Johnston
Petrosinelli, Diana – Cranston
Pickel, Kathleen – Johnston
Pimentel, Diane Silva – Lincoln
Poirier, Ron – Pawtucket
Quick, Diantha – Tiverton
Robinson, Gail – Coventry
Ryan, Melinda – Burrillville
Solway, Sharon – Tiverton
Stephenson, Holly – S. Kingstown
Storti, Sandra – Cranston
Sutton, Sharon – Ex.-W. Greenwich
Therriault, Jennifer – Warwick
Wagner, Lynda – Bristol/Warren
Warfel, Joanne – New Shoreham

APPENDIX C: WRITING PROCESS DIAGRAM





Rhode Island Writing Assessment

School:
District:
Grade: 11

Test Date: Spring 2001
Teacher:

WHAT WAS TESTED

This assessment measures a student's ability to communicate effectively through writing in standard English. Every student in grade 3, 7, and 11 created a written product based on a topic appropriate for the grade level. Grade 3 and 7 students had two 40-minute periods to complete their writing sample; grade 11 students had one 75-minute period. They could receive scores from 2-12.

Performance Report For: FirstName LastName

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	YOUR CHILD'S SCORE	SCHOOL*	DISTRICT*
Achieved the Standard with Honors (Score of 11 or 12) At this level, the student demonstrates outstanding ability to communicate effectively in writing by presenting thoughtful, logical, and well-organized ideas. The student uses language effectively and demonstrates excellent control of grammar and conventions.	8	6%	5%
Achieved the Standard (Score of 8, 9, or 10) At this level, the student demonstrates the ability to communicate in writing by presenting logical, developed, and well-organized ideas. The student uses clear language, and the writing contains few intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.		23%	20%
Nearly Achieved the Standard (Score of 6 or 7) At this level, the student demonstrates the ability to communicate in writing by presenting some relevant ideas with some support. The writing shows some sense of organization and contains intrusive errors in grammar and conventions.		27%	20%
Below the Standard (Score of 4 or 5) At this level, the student demonstrates little ability to communicate in writing by presenting unclear or barely developed ideas. The writing lacks sentence control and contains serious errors in grammar and conventions.		24%	30%
Little Evidence of Achievement (Score of 2, 3, or OT**) At this level, the student does not demonstrate an ability to communicate in writing. The writing is underdeveloped or incoherent and contains serious and persistent errors in grammar and conventions.		16%	20%
No Score A score of no score (NS) is given to students who were not tested and were not coded as exempted.		4%	5%

* These columns show the percent of students at this grade who achieved each performance level.

** A score of off topic (OT) is given to papers that have no relation to the topic or are not written in English.

APPENDIX E: SELECTED RESOURCES* ON PROCESS WRITING

JOURNALS:

The English Journal, NCTE
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, IRA
Language Arts, NCTE
Primary Voices, NCTE
The Reading Teacher, IRA
Voices from the Middle, NCTE

WEBSITES:

National Council of Teachers of English: www.ncte.org
 International Reading Association: www.reading.org
 National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement (CELA) cela@csc.albany.edu

Atwell, Nancie: *Coming to Know: Writing to Learn in the intermediate Grades*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1989.

Here is a book for teachers who are ready to put writing to work across the curriculum, written by teachers of grades three through six who are dissatisfied with encyclopedia-based approaches to content area writing. They asked their students instead to write as historians and mathematicians, as scientists and literary critics do - to use the process of writing to discover meaning. The many examples of students work and teacher response, clear explanations of procedure, appendices of basic resources, and practical emphasis on what writing can do to form children as learners makes *Coming to Know* a valuable tool for teachers.

Atwell, Nancie: *New Understandings About Writing, Reading and Learning Second Edition*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1998

In this long-awaited second edition, Nancie Atwell includes chapters on genres, evaluation and the teacher as writer. There are lists of mini-lessons, new expectations and rules for writing and reading workshops.

Belanoff, Pat and Marcia Dickson, eds.: *Portfolios-Process and Product*. Portsmouth, NH; Boynton-Cook, 1991.

This practical, theoretical book focuses exclusively on portfolio assessment.

Bomer, Randy: *Time for Meaning: Crafting Literate Lives in Middle and High School*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1995

This book provides examples of how to teach writing effectively. It brings a bold curriculum to the writing workshop and confronts the realities of today's classrooms.

* Synopses have been culled from the publishers' catalogues.

APPENDIX E

Calkins, Lucy McCormick: *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1986.

Although ostensibly focused on writing in the classroom, K-6, this book provides an excellent grounding in using writing as a developmental learning tool at all levels. In *The Art of Teaching Writing*, a book that is enormously probing and deeply personal, Calkins begins with the question, “What is essential in teaching writing?” and then brings those essentials to life in real classrooms. Yet this book is not simply *about* writing; it is about teaching, about working with children, and through their writing, opening their eyes to the world and making it comprehensible. Teaching writing is not just another aspect of language arts, or a different route to reading, it is the development of expression and the creation of a tool for understanding. Calkins succeeds in presenting a method for teaching writing, but her book should also be read for the insight she provides into the growth of children’s minds.

Claggett, Fran: *A Measure of Success: From Assignment to Assessment in English Language Arts*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1996.

Claggett, in this award winning book, integrates current reading and writing theories and includes a number of specific materials that can be duplicated for classroom use.

Dahl, Karin L. ed.: *Teacher as Writer: Entering the Professional Conversation*. National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), 1992.

The purpose of this book is to encourage teachers to write. Dahl notes in the Introduction that, “As teachers place themselves in the role of writers they become consumers of professional literature and creators of new information about teaching. To participate in the professional conversation is to shape its topics and focus—to change and be changed by its information and differing points of view” (p.2). The book is divided into six sections including, “From an Author’s Perspective,” “Thinking Like a Writer” and “Essential Information for Teacher Writers.” The chapters were all written by teachers and contain details and explanations of the process of writing.

Fletcher, Ralph: *What A Writer Needs*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1993.

Fletcher teaches qualities of good writing through an engaging, vivid discussion, richly illustrated with details. He provides a wealth of specific, practical strategies for challenging and extending student writing.

Fulwiler, Toby: *Teaching With Writing*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1989.

A workshop approach to integrating writing into classes, this book gives an excellent introduction to writing as a way of learning.

Gordon, Naomi, ed.: *Classroom Experiences: The Writing Process in Action*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1984.

Teachers, administrators, and parents will discover in this book ways to make writing a genuine learning experience for students in grades K-8. Seven experienced and successful teachers describe their explorations in evolving a process approach to writing in their classrooms and in a school system. They recount their stories in personal and direct ways so that others can easily benefit from their practices. Each teacher deals forthrightly with the problems and frustrations of changing from more traditional ways of teaching writing and reveals the pleasure that can be gained from seeing students become more independent, thoughtful writers. The authors offer helpful ideas on correcting and advising students to help them improve their writing, and on handling the increased paperload that results from an active writing program. "[This is] a marvelously practical book about putting Donald Graves' process approach to writing into action in the classroom."—Harvard Educational Review.

Graves, Donald H.: *Build a Literature Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1991.

This latest volume in a series is about making reading/writing decisions in your own classroom. You learn how you and the children work together to improve learning.

Graves, Donald H.: *Discover Your Own Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1989.

This book begins with a look at some teachers who combine their own explorations in literacy with their students', and then invites teachers to experiment with their own writing, reading, listening and learning.

Graves, Donald H.: *Experiment With Fiction*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1989.

Fiction is a natural genre for children. Most of us do not understand it adequately. You will experiment with ten-minute fictional occasions, write with your children and meld work in writing fiction with your reading program.

Graves, Donald H.: *Investigate Nonfiction*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1989.

This book builds on what children already can do in nonfiction. You will see how the various nonfiction genres extend from children's use of oral language.

Graves, Donald H.: *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1983.

This book has become the basic text in the movement that established writing as a central part of literacy education and gave impetus to the whole language approach in classrooms. While many other excellent books have been published that elaborate upon and extend the field of writing education, none has had so significant an effect on the language arts curriculum. Graves' ideas have received attention from teachers, parents, administrators, publishers, and journalists, and his book has been reviewed, discussed, and dissected by educators worldwide. In effect, *Writing* has done something uncommon: It has changed education.

APPENDIX E

Harste, Jerome, and Kathy G. Short: *Creating Classrooms for Authors: The Reading — Writing Connection.* Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1988.

In an attempt to develop a practical theory of literacy instruction, Jerry Harste and his colleague, Kathy Short, began working with teachers in first – through sixth-grade classrooms. Their aim was to create the best literacy-learning environment possible, given what is currently known about how young children learn to read and write. *Creating Classrooms for Authors* is the result of that involvement. Written in response to teachers' requests for a practical reference guide to organizing process-centered classrooms, this volume presents a curricular frame within which teachers can plan classroom activities that help students understand what reading and writing have to do with reasoning and learning.

Hewitt, Geoff: *A Portfolio Primer-Teaching, Collecting and Assessing Student Writing.* Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1994.

This book explains how any teacher can build a community of writers using portfolios to demonstrate progress across the curriculum. He suggests regular writing activities and explains how students can generate meaningful topics.

Lane, Barry: *After The End: Teaching and Learning Creative Revision.* Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann 1993.

This book provides many practical strategies to teach students how to revise after they think they have reached "the end."

Langer, Judith A. and Arthur N. Applebee: *How Writing Shapes Thinking: A Study of Teaching and Learning.* National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), 1987.

After an initial study of eighteen science and social studies teachers who used writing activities in their classrooms, the authors did an in-depth study of the ways that seven other teachers used writing in science, social studies, English and home economics classrooms. Specifically, the study shows that activities that involve writing lead to better learning than activities involving only reading and studying. Further examination of teaching methods revealed that writing activities can be developed that support content goals in a variety of subject areas. Content-area writing helps students prepare for new activities, to review learned material, and to reformulate and extend ideas and experiences.

Newkirk, Thomas and Nancie Atwell, eds.: *Understanding Writing: Ways of Observing, Learning and Teaching.* Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1988.

Writing teachers must be observers. At the heart of the writing process, instruction is the art of informed observation. The skilled teacher needs to determine what students can do, what changes they've made, what patterns of assistance they receive from other students, what themes dominate their writing. And teachers need to observe themselves — to reflect on what they see and do. *Understanding Writing* is a book about observing. It contains thirty chapters, most written by classroom teachers, that provide insights into students growth.

Rief, Linda: *Seeking Diversity: Language Arts with Adolescents.* Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1992

This book is filled with the diverse, rich voices of adolescents as they search in their reading, their writing, and their self-evaluations for who they are and where they fit in this world. Rief comes to know herself as a reader and writer in her own classroom.

APPENDIX E

Romano, Tom: *Clearing the Way, Working With Teenage Writers*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1987.

This book is written for secondary-school English teachers whose job is to help teenagers become better writers. Romano discusses the importance of respecting students' words, the use of writing to learn and discover, and writing processes in theory and practice.

Rubenstein, Susanne: *Go Public! Encouraging Student Writers to Publish*. Urbana, IL; NCTE, 1998.

Intended for middle and high school teachers, this book offers specific writing ideas and classroom activities to help students develop the confidence and ability to publish in a wide market.

Spandel, Vicki and Richard J. Stiggins: *Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instruction*. Longman, 1990.

The missing link in effective writing instruction is everyday assessment techniques. These techniques, when used by teachers and students, connect assessment and writing instruction to successful teaching. The benefit is an effective, efficient and reflective strategy for teaching writing skills. Based on seven years collaboration in research and teaching, *Creating Writers* reveals a clear set of standards for good writing. The authors link these standards to practical strategies, encouraging good writing and evaluation. The result is highly motivated and effective writers and teachers.

Weaver, Constance: *Teaching Grammar in Context*. Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1996.

Weaver offers teachers a rationale and practical ideas for teaching grammar not in isolation but in the context of writing. She examines aspects of grammar on which teachers might focus as they guide their students in writing and revising sentences and in editing selected pieces.